U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE,
BUREAU OF ANIMAL INDUSTRY—BULLETIN No. 37.
D. E. SALMON, D. V. M., Chief of Bureau.

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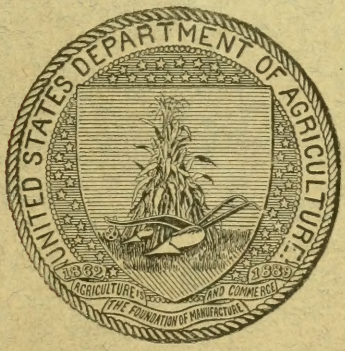
MARKET CLASSES OF HORSES.

BY

GEORGE M. ROMMEL, B. S. A.,
EXPERT IN ANIMAL HUSBANDRY, BUREAU OF ANIMAL INDUSTRY.



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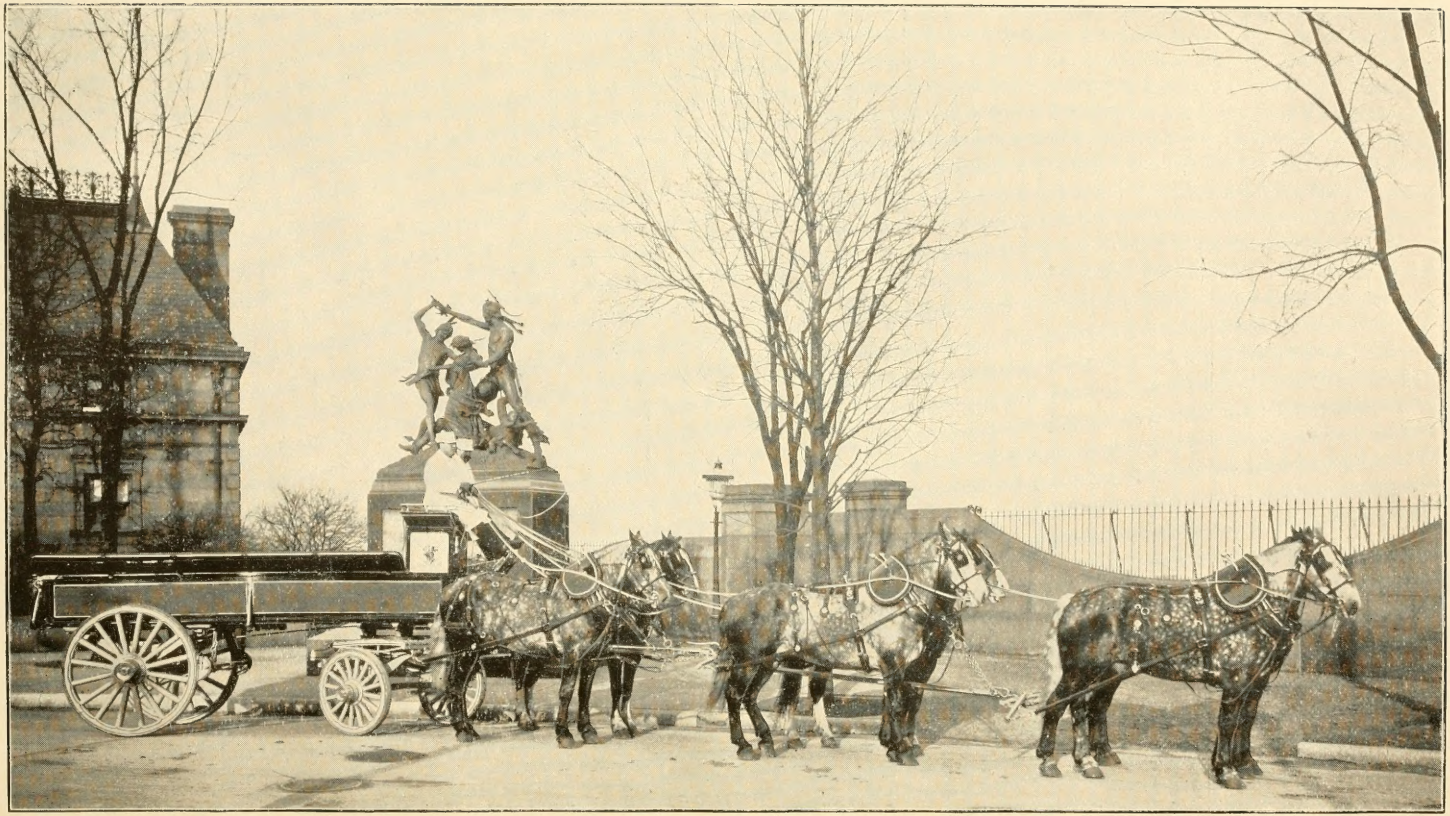

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A PRIZE-WINNING CROSS-MATCHED DRAFT TEAM.

These horses faithfully represent the class purchased for American city use, though not of extreme weight.

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LETTER OF TRANSMITTAL.

U. S. Department of Agriculture,
Bureau of Animal Industry,
Washington, D. C., November 29, 1901.

Sir: I have the honor to transmit herewith a manuscript on "Market classes of horses," by Mr. George M. Rommel, expert in animal husbandry, of this Bureau. The information contained herein has been obtained largely by visits to the principal horse markets of the country, representative breeding establishments, and hunt clubs. It is believed to be the kind of information desired by the horse raisers, and I therefore recommend that the manuscript be published as Bulletin No. 37 of this Bureau.

Respectfully,

D. E. Salmon,
Chief of Bureau.

Hon. James Wilson,
Secretary.

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MARKET CLASSES OF HORSES.

INTRODUCTORY.

The growth of the horse market during the past few years, its present healthy tone, and the apparent promise of a continuance of these conditions for at least a considerable time to come, warrant the bestowal of time and attention, not only upon the general demands of the market, but also upon rather detailed examinations of the various kinds of horses that are wanted.

In this article the market classes are generally referred to in the colloquial terms of the market. This, it is thought, will, to a considerable extent, tend to prevent confusion and misunderstanding. Aside from casual references, no attempt is made specifically to discuss breeding or fitting for market.

For convenience, all points of an anatomical nature are grouped under the head of "Conformation." Although according to the generally accepted usage by the best authorities on score-card practice and live stock judging, this is a somewhat broad use of the term, it is not technically incorrect, and the advantages gained by the elimination of details that might prove wearisome will, it is believed, warrant such treatment.

The classifications here considered are made as comprehensive as possible, embracing the views of dealers in all of the principal markets of the country. All the classes mentioned will not be found present in all markets, nor will all markets have exactly the same qualifications, but these differences are so slight as to be practically unimportant.

Especially in regard to size and weight, it must be borne in mind that the figures given are not arbitrary. Not only will they vary in different parts of the country with different markets, but dealers in the same market will differ in their ideas as to the exact sizes and weights of the various classes. With this, as with all points, the attempt has been made to strike an average to obtain a consensus of opinion, as it were. It is always to be remembered that "doctors differ," both as to the symptoms of a patient when ill and as to his normal appearance and proper conduct when well.

Prices are seldom mentioned here, for the reason that they are subject to continual fluctuations, and any that might be quoted would be serviceable only for the time of writing. Such information is accurate only when gained from regular market publications, and is easily obtained.

For specific information regarding contemporaneous market conditions there is no better or more easily approached source of information than the commission firms and dealers on the market, whose courteous assistance, it should be mentioned, has made this bulletin a possibility; and no better school for practical instruction can be imagined than an auction ring in one of our great horse markets on a sale day during the height of the season.

PRIMARY CONSIDERATIONS OF THE MARKET.

A general observation of the horse markets in the United States reveals very different conditions from those existing in the early part of the last decade. Before going into details and ascertaining the kind of horse that the several demands on the market require, three facts present themselves for consideration:

First. The market is seen to be on a much firmer basis than it was in the years from 1893 to 1897. Not only are prices much higher, but, generally speaking, the competition among buyers is keen, and a serviceably sound, well-set-up horse of the right type, in good condition, can almost always be disposed of at a profit to the producer.

Second. One is impressed with the pronounced scarcity of animals of the better grades, especially among light horses. Dealers can not satisfy the demands that come to them for high-class roadsters, coach horses, and saddlers. Even among "business horses" a higher price must often be paid than buyers desire, and it is said that this has even led some large establishments to send agents into the country to take advantage of the natural differences between farm and market prices. To a casual observer this is, perhaps, the most striking feature that presents itself. A change from a condition of overproduction and panic prices to one of scarcity and strong prices has come about within the course of less than five years.

Third. Going more into the details of the market, we find a pretty well-defined system of classification. Buyers are on the market to get horses of a certain type, and thus have created "classes." It is true that there are still thousands of horses every year that are shipped in simply to be gotten rid of—to sell for whatever they will bring; yet they are, as a rule, sold at a loss, and the only horses that sell at satisfactory prices are those that conform to the requirements that buyers demand.

The reasons for these conditions are rather definitely understood, but a brief review of them here may not be out of place.

CAUSES OF THE DEPRESSION OF THE LAST DECADE.

Going back of the firmness of the present market, the causes of the low prices and overproduction that preceded it present themselves.

PASSING OF THE STREET-CAR HORSE.

The recent depression of the horse business began about 1890. Up to that time immense numbers of animals were in demand for street-car use. A fairly good animal was used, but there was no certain fixity of type. This trade absorbed very many horses that had always constituted the overwhelming majority on the market—the small chunks and the general-purpose animals; and with the introduction of the cable car and, almost immediately after, the sweeping substitution of electric cars for horse cars in nearly all the large cities, these immense numbers of horses were thrown on the market without a demand for them, and the public was suddenly confronted with a condition of extreme overproduction. This, however, would only indirectly affect the higher grades. Extra individual horses maintained a fairly good scale of prices, and never at any time were they such a drug on the market as the commoner sorts.

The severest test to the market horse was yet to come. Strongly organized conditions might have tided over the effects of oversupply that the falling off of the demand for the street-car horse brought about, but the punishment was to be made all the more complete by the financial panic of 1893.

THE FINANCIAL PANIC OF 1893.

The great panic that began in this year, but whose influence was felt most severely in the horse-producing sections two years later, was really the most effective cause for the breakdown in the horse market. The cheaper grades fell still lower and the higher classes began a descent in prices that forced men out of the business and had a most disastrous effect in creating a general distrust of the horse, not only on the part of men who were already engaged in his production, but also with prospective producers. All classes of stock were affected, but it was the horse breeders who had the worst "scare," and it was freely predicted that horse raising would never again exist as a factor in live stock husbandry.

THE BICYCLE AND THE ELECTRIC CARRIAGE.

On the heels of the panic came the bicycle and in a few years the electric carriage followed. The bicycle influenced particularly the demand for cheap drivers the inferior grades and naturally intensified the downfall of prices. However, though for a time the growing use of the bicycle brought about a decline in the use of horses, its effect was hardly so severe as appeared; certainly it was not permanent. The use of the bicycle became most widespread among persons

who could afford neither to purchase nor maintain a horse and among those who constitute a large part of the patronage of livery stables. If it has severely affected the horse in any capacity, it is by the inroads that liverymen claim it has made on their business. The most effective force for furthering the downfall in prices was simply fright, which brought about an unnecessary unloading of horses on a market already oversupplied. The results after the lapse of a few years, and the adjustment of the bicycle to its proper place as an important economic factor, with the return of the business to normal conditions, give ample reason for such opinions.

Experience with automobiles has shown that in their present state of development their effect on the horse market is not serious. For business purposes they have not yet been found to be entirely satisfactory, whereas the bicycle has become an invaluable adjunct of business. At present the "auto" is the least dangerous of all the deterring influences that operate against the horse market.

CAUSES OF PRESENT SCARCITY.

THE DECLINE OF HORSE BREEDING.

The lack of confidence in the horse-breeding business which resulted from the depressing influences of the panic period undoubtedly brought about a decline in the breeding of the best grades. This can not be shown very accurately, for the Twelfth Census has reported the largest number of horses in the history of the country. By a careful study of the market conditions, however, it is evident that a more exacting market has found an inferior grade of horses from which to draw its supply. Misfits and culls are common enough, but they are not in demand. The scarcity that exists to-day is most apparent among the better grade of horses, and we are forced to the conclusion that these horses have rapidly decreased in numbers, while unsalable, inferior sorts have increased. The period of low prices caused men to stop breeding good horses, but failed to stop the progress of the scrubs.

THE EXPORT TRADE.

Almost coincident with the beginning of the panic of 1893, a new force began to operate to offset the disastrous conditions of the horse market, so that while this date marks the beginning of the severe downfall in prices, it also marks the beginning of their revival.

The World's Fair year (1893) brought to the United States among its visitors those whose search for good horses for export, directed toward the great markets of the West, was to be the rejuvenating force that would once more place the horse in his rightful position as a revenue producer for the farm. The effect of the demand they created was an almost instant rise in prices of the better grades. Inferior sorts were only sympathetically affected, for it is not profitable to ship any-

thing but "toppy" animals. The growth of exports was tremendous. From about 3,000 in 1893, they have increased fifteen times over in seven years, and to all appearances the demand is by no means yet satisfied.

The exporters entered the market with a call for horses of definite qualifications that have been rigidly adhered to. Hodgepodge methods would not and can not pay in supplying this market.

The following statement of exports for the fiscal years 1890 to 1901, inclusive, shows an enormous growth:[1]

Exports of horses for the fiscal years 1890 to 1901.

1890	3,501
1891	3,110
1892	3,226
1893	2,967
1894	5,246
1895	13,984
1896	25,126
1897	39,532
1898	51,150
1899	45,778
1900[2]	64,722
1901	82,250

The demand for so many animals for export very greatly increases competition, and, as it represents a much broader field for the market to cover than formerly, it is a second cause for the apparent scarcity of good marketable stock. This trade is the means by which surplus stock may be marketed and good prices maintained. If no more horses are produced than are needed for our own uses, it will generally happen that the export trade can not exist; for home buyers can nearly always pay better prices than exporters, and it is easily seen that, when the supply is short, a strong market may exist independent of foreign demand. Information received within the last two months indicates that such conditions are largely present at this time. There is still a large demand from abroad, but prices have risen to such an extent that this trade has been very much diminished.

GROWTH OF THE LOCAL DEMAND.

With the growth of the export trade, the great increase in the demands of the local market has required horses in large numbers.

[1] From reports of Bureau of Statistics, Treasury Department.

[2] The shipments to Africa during the last two years are largely responsible for the great increase for the years 1900 and 1901. This is shown as follows:

For fiscal year ended June 30, 1899	127
For fiscal year ended June 30, 1900	10,220
For fiscal year ended June 30, 1901	37,465

These exports, developed under abnormal conditions, must not be looked upon as permanent.

The increase of population, with a growing love of a good horse, and the wonderful growth of business, call for many more horses than were needed for such purposes in the early "90's." The exacting nature which characterizes the foreign demand is also coming to be a notable feature of the home demand.

This third cause—the local demand—combined with the export trade, makes a broader market. Undoubtedly, there are as many horses in the country now as ten years ago, though of an inferior quality, but relatively there is a great scarcity.

GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS OF THE MARKET.

WHAT CONSTITUTES A MARKET CLASS?

By a market class we mean the demand that exists for a horse of certain characteristics definitely specified. We find the requirement that certain work shall be done in certain ways. This requires a horse of certain size, conformation, style, and action, and becomes more exacting as time goes on and the demand for such a horse increases. For this reason it is readily seen that classes on the market at one time may be cut off by reason of a change in the kind of work to be done or a change in the method of doing it; such, for instance, as the substitution of electricity for horses as a motive power for street railways. On the other hand, we have an illustration of the creation of new classes in the opening up of the English demand for the omnibus horse. The increasing demand for hunters for both the local and export trade and the brisk trade in polo ponies are also instances of such conditions. The kind of work and the manner in which it is to be done, therefore, develop the buyer's demands and thus create the market class.

WHEN WILL A HORSE SELL WELL?

The question naturally arises, When will a horse sell well? This is answered in describing the requirements of the various classes, which is done elsewhere in this bulletin. An animal will be in good demand when he meets the qualifications of a market class; the more clearly he does so the greater demand there will be for him and the higher will be his selling price; and a horse that goes into a class because his breeder was successful in breeding him for that class is much more likely to sell profitably than one that drops into a class as the result of an accident in breeding, handling, or fitting for the market. A breeder must determine for himself whether he can produce such a horse and dispose of him at a profit. That he will find a good demand for animals of the right type is quite certain. The individuality of the horse himself, then, will indicate his class.

GENERAL ESSENTIALS OF A MARKET HORSE.

Before taking up the details of the various classes it may be well to consider the essentials that all classes must have—the requirements of a drafter as well as a coacher, or of a busser, as well as a cob, roadster, or saddler.

AGE.

Mature and well-broken horses are always the best sellers. A year or two spent in waiting for a horse to develop and educating him means an expenditure of time and money on the part of the purchaser which is, as a rule, undesirable, unless the horse is bought specifically for the purpose of fitting him for the finished market. The ideal age is five years, buyers usually purchasing animals ranging from five to eight. The classes vary somewhat in this respect. A horse intended for draft purposes may be marketed somewhat sooner than a harness horse or saddler.

BREEDING AND SEX.

The breed to which a horse belongs has very little influence on his selling price. All that is required is that he be a good individual of his class. A good horse always sells. Geldings are preferred somewhat generally to mares.

COLOR.

Color does not figure so strongly as many would lead us to believe. Almost any color with excellence to back it will sell well, except white, flea-bitten gray, "mealy" bay, or any other color that might be termed "washed out." Among drafters, no special color seems to have a preference; with harness horses and saddlers, bays, browns, and chestnuts have first preference, but grays and blacks sell readily if "good." Well-matched teams, both in harness and draft classes, usually bring higher prices than if sold singly.

CONDITION.

Condition is very often overlooked. It is absolutely essential that a horse be in good condition (well fed) to bring what he is really worth. This is particularly true of animals of the draft type. Whether it increases the animal's real value as a worker is not necessary to consider. The market demands high condition and pays those men well who cater to it. The great lack of condition is shown by the fact that many horses are sent in for sale only to be reshipped to the country for further feeding. Condition is almost as essential as fat on a steer, and its absence cuts from 25 to 50 per cent from the selling price of a horse. The requirements of the market in this line are well worthy of notice.

DISPOSITION AND INTELLIGENCE.

Every class calls for an animal of intelligence and good disposition, willing to pull at a good rate or set a fast pace on the driveway, and capable and cool-headed in an emergency. The use of horses on crowded streets, often among large numbers of pedestrians, makes the latter particularly essential. The need of these qualifications is more important in some classes than in others.

THE MARKET HORSE IN DETAIL.

SOUNDNESS.

The most important requirement of a market horse is "serviceable" soundness; that is, he must have no chronic disease that will unfit him for work of a general nature. He must be sound in wind and in limb, able to do a reasonable amount of work without undue fatigue or premature breakdowns. The majority of the horses sold from a great market go to the city trade and are compelled to do their work on hard, unyielding pavements, pulling heavy loads, or developing speed that is an even greater strain on the feet and legs. The average period of usefulness on city streets of a horse that was sound at the start is not more than five years, and it is manifestly evident that this time will be materially decreased if he begins this work in an unsound condition. Broken wind, sidebones, unsound hocks, and all the various other ills that a horse is heir to should be strenuously guarded against, as they greatly diminish his value.

CONFORMATION.

The next requirement, then, is a conformation that will enable an animal to do hard work with a minimum of wear, and give him the longest possible period of soundness. Special emphasis should be placed on the foot, which should be of medium size, with hard and dense horn, plenty of height to the heels and plenty of room between them, a large elastic frog, and a nicely hollowed sole—in short, a sound, durable foot. The pastern slopes well, corresponding to the slope of the shoulder. These conditions with flat, fully developed muscles, strong, well-developed joints, strongly supported knees and hocks, clear, clean-cut tendons standing well out from the leg, and dense bone of a quantity sufficient to sustain the weight of the horse—will give a limb well calculated to withstand the wear and tear of a city pavement.

Joining the fore and hind quarters we must look for a deep, fairly wide, and compact middle piece, with ample room for chest organs, and no pinching at the waist. Too much width should be avoided, as the action of the fore legs is almost sure to be bad with such a conformation. A short back is generally sought, especially one which

Photograph by Lawrence.

THE DRAFT TYPE.

This horse was purchased for the export trade. He is a typical London vanner, but represents no less a medium weight drafter, which sells well for American street use. Note the massive appearance, compact body, short legs, and good quality.

Photograph by Lawrence.

A GOOD EXPRESSER.

This animal shows the intelligence, high quality, and compactness of his class. He would sell well on the English market as a "parcel carter."

shows the least possible amount of space between the last ribs and the hips, giving a "close coupled" horse. This is almost as essential as a sound foot. A long, loose-ribbed, open-jointed, wasp-waisted animal is especially to be avoided. Such a conformation indicates lack of strength and forecasts an early breakdown. The shoulders should be deep and smooth, and hind quarters deeply muscled, wide, and well rounded. A sloping rump is always unsightly and detracts both from the use and value of the horse, for it stands to reason that such a conformation can not furnish the same amount of muscle that a nicely rounded one can. The tail should be set high and smartly carried. Prominent shoulder points, hips, and buttocks are objectionable.

The neck should be clearly outlined, of moderate length, and well muscled, with a good crest. The head should be clean-cut and of moderate length, with a rather small ear, much breadth and fullness of forehead, a large, clear, full, intelligent eye, and a wide-open nostril, showing good lung power and consequent stamina. The mouth should be of good size, with sound teeth, and firm lips of medium thickness.

Over all these must be an abundance of muscle laid on smoothly and nicely rounded. Quality is highly essential, and the mistake of growing size without it will be found expensive. A close connection between quality and stamina is very clearly recognized by horsemen.

HORSES FOR DRAFT.

Any horse the purpose of which is to draw large loads, whether at the walk or trot, may be spoken of as a "horse for draft." Common usage has fixed the term "draft" on horses of specified weight and size, but there are other classes on the market whose conformation is what has come to be known as the "draft form," but which differ from the drafter in the matter of size and weight and the manner of performing their work. The drafter proper works always at a walk, while other classes of horses of draft type do their work mainly at the trot. As we go along, the close relationship between the different classes of this group should be noticed, for it is one of the most interesting and instructive features of the market.

THE DRAFT HORSE.

Size and weight.—The weight that will characterize a horse as a drafter will be that above which he can not work at the trot without waste of effort and horseflesh and below which he can work more economically by hauling smaller loads at increased speed. This weight is pretty generally conceded to be 1,600 pounds in fair flesh. The height of a drafter will vary from 15.3 hands for the smaller sorts to 17.2 hands for horses of great weights.

The importance of weight in a drafter must not be overlooked. His purpose is solely that of heavy work, pulling great loads at the walk, and to fulfill this requirement most perfectly the first essential is weight, with, of course, proportional size. Without weight the immense loads that are to be hauled over our city streets could not be moved, and careful observation of the average prices has shown that, other things being equal, draft horseflesh is worth about $25 for every additional hundred pounds it can show over 1,600 pounds.[1] It is also essential that as much as possible of this weight be bone and muscle. Though many buyers unquestionably demand fat, and the truth is that a horse can not sell for a creditable price unless fat, the effective value of a horse as a worker should not be lost sight of.

Conformation.—His conformation should enable the animal to make his weight as effective as possible, and, at the same time, assure a reasonably long period of usefulness. For this purpose, he must have a rather short, heavy neck and a shoulder sloping enough to take the collar well, but not so straight as to cause a "post leg" and bring about premature unsoundness. The back should be short, well muscled, and strongly coupled to the hind quarters, which should be nicely rounded, smooth, and plentifully supplied with muscle. Particular attention should be paid to the hock. The legs must be moderately short and have a supply of bone sufficient to support the weight and work of the animal, and, of course, must be sound. A short leg, with low-set knees and hocks, is one that will stand wear and tear and usually goes with a strong, closely coupled body. Head and neck should be proportionate to the size of the horse. The whole appearance should be massive.

Action.—The action of the drafter is confined almost exclusively to the walk. For this reason the walk is of vital importance. Rapidity of step and length of stride enable him to cover considerable ground in the least possible time. Straightness, smoothness, regularity, and lack of friction enable him to do this with the least possible wear and injury to himself. The trot should possess all the merits of the walk.

Demand.—Horses of this description are in strong demand for use in city streets of America and Europe. The great packing houses, brewing companies, wholesale houses, and heavy dray and transfer companies buy this class of horse, differing slightly in weight, according to the purpose to which it is to be put or the desires of the purchaser.

The rougher, plainer drafters are used for the coarser work of the cities, where the style of a team is of no particular importance to its owner. The lumber trade takes such a horse, often buying animals that are blemished or even unsound.

The horse used for the American city trade is also in strong demand for the export trade to England and the Continent.

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[1] Craig. Judging Live Stock, p. 34.

THE LONDON VANNER.

The horse known in England as a van horse is very largely purchased on the American markets. He is simply a good, "toppy" American drafter, such as has already been described, weighing from 1,600 to 1,800 pounds, and standing from 16 to 16.2 hands, with a strong, compact body on short, strong legs, with sound, healthy feet. He is used to draw heavy drays, vans, etc.

THE SCOTCH, OR GLASGOW, VANNER.

This horse is about the same as the English as to weight, though he may be lighter, and is more upstanding—that is, on longer legs. His work is the same as that of other classes of horses intended for moderately heavy city work.

The horse that the Englishmen term a "cart horse" is extremely rare on the American market, and, when found, not always of the best quality. He should stand 16.2 to 17.2 hands, and weigh 2,000 pounds and upward.

THE EXPRESS HORSE.

After the drafter, the remaining classes of the draft type are distinguished by the fact that their work is done almost exclusively at the trot. The first of these is the expresser. This is one of the best and highest classes on the market so far as individual excellence is concerned, and horses that fill the requirements are always in demand at strong prices. An expresser is the best finished of all of the minor draft classes.

Size and weight.—The size and weight vary somewhat, as a matter of course, but, as a general rule, an expresser stands from 15.2 to 16 hands, and weighs from 1,250 to 1,500 pounds, or even more, the weight varying with the kind of work, wagon, etc., to which a horse is to be put. In some cases a team hitched to an express wagon will be seen showing all the characteristics of the true drafter, but, as a rule, these horses are for heavy dray work, and are not looked upon as representative expressers.

Conformation.—The most pronounced type of expresser is a rather upstanding horse with strong, closely coupled body, considerable width of chest and hips, sound, clean limbs, and particularly sound, healthy feet. Special stress is placed on the health, quality, and conformation of the foot. Excepting the class following (the bussers) no class of draft type has to undergo the same amount of strain on the feet as the expresser. Hauling a loaded wagon at the trot soon tells on any but the best organs of locomotion.

When an expresser is said to be upstanding the inference should not be that he is what could be denominated "leggy." This extreme is to be absolutely avoided, and as between the two, a horse with short legs is much preferable. Buyers demand a sensible

medium. The most striking features in the conformation of an expresser are (1) his high finish, with considerable weight—"a draft horse with coach finish," and (2) his rather upstanding appearance as compared with other draft classes.

Action.—His work makes the trot of an expresser his most important gait. It should, above all things, be straight, frictionless, as smooth as possible, and quick and regular. The walk must be similarly developed.

Demand.—The express companies constitute the ruling factors in the trade for this class of horses, but other lines of business that require an extra good light-delivery horse find in the expresser such an animal as they desire. The lighter teams of the packing companies are heavy expressers, weighing from 1,450 to 1,550 pounds.

Fire companies buy horses very much after this type, getting a somewhat "toppy" animal that shows much intelligence and courage. Police horses come from somewhat similar sources.

ENGLISH TYPES.

Much is heard of English "light vanners" and "parcel carters." These are simply the English forms of what we call expressers, changed somewhat to conform to English requirements—that is, with legs as short as possible. The two names are used for practically the same horse.

THE OMNIBUS HORSE.

Size and weight.—A typical busser stands from 15.1 to 15.3 hands, and weighs from 1,200 to 1,400 pounds.

Conformation.—In form he is a compact, rugged little horse with all the characteristics of the true draft type, set on short, strong legs, with ample bone, more or less feather, and sound feet. He should carry a fairly high head and show some style.

Action.—The work of this class is performed almost wholly at the trot, and, accordingly, we will look for a horse that is a "straight line mover"—that is, straight and true in movement. He should have plenty of activity, with a moderately attractive action, but especially with a trot that is quick, straight, elastic, and smooth—a true, frictionless gait.

Demand.—These horses are used in large numbers on the streets of foreign (especially English) cities to draw the omnibuses that are a common means of transportation. Some are employed in the trade of American cities demanding a light, stocky, active horse for miscellaneous purposes. He fills, to some extent, the call for a general-purpose horse, but he should not be confused with the horse quoted as "general purpose" in market reports. The prices that bussers are bringing show not only the strength of the demand but the comparatively small supply.

Photograph by Lawrence.

A BUSSER.

Purchased for the London trade. Observe the close conformity to the draft type in this and the preceding classes, the essential differences being those of weight.

By courtesy of Rider and Driver.

ROADSTERS.

In comparison with the coach classes, observe, chiefly, the more angular and rangy conformation.

THE TRAM HORSE.

Trammers are very little different from bussers except that they are rather plainer, an inch or two smaller in size, and correspondingly lighter, but they should have as much weight as possible for their height. They are used on the tramways of European cities.

ARTILLERY HORSES.

Contracts for horses for the army artillery service often give an outlet for small horses of the draft type weighing from 1,100 to 1,250 pounds. They are not of any particular line of breeding, being often of the blood of the light breeds, but they must fill very exact requirements to be acceptable. Two classes are generally recognized, one for light and the other for heavy artillery. Quite large numbers are purchased for use in the British army, a horse answering the description of a light parcel carter being taken for this purpose.

The specifications herewith given for the United States artillery horse will be seen to be those of an expresser without the weight:

(Article 1142, United States Army Regulations, 1901.)

The artillery horse is required for quick draft purposes, and should move the carriage ordinarily by weight thrown into the collar rather than by muscular exertion.

The animal must be sound, without blemish or defect, well bred, of a kind disposition, and free from vicious habits, a square trotter; well broken to harness, and gentle under the saddle, with easy mouth and gait, and with free, prompt action at the walk, trot, and gallop; and otherwise to conform to the following description:

A gelding of uniform and hardy color, in good condition, from 15¼ to 16 hands high; weight of the lead horse not less than 1,050 pounds and that of the wheel horse not more than 1,200 pounds; from 5 to 8 years old, head and ears small, forehead broad, eyes large and prominent, vision perfect in every respect; chest full, broad, and deep; fore legs straight and standing well under; shoulders sufficiently broad to support the collar, but not too heavy; barrel large and increasing from girth toward flank; withers elevated; back short and straight, with broad, deep loins, short coupled with solid hind quarters; hocks well bent and under the horse; pasterns slanting, and feet sound and in good order. Long-legged, loose-jointed, long-bodied, and narrow-chested horses, as well as those which are restive, vicious, or too free in harness, or which do not, upon rigid inspection, meet the above requirements in every respect, will be rejected.

HORSES FOR HARNESS AND SADDLE.

In taking up the class which, excluding cavalry horses, might be termed "pleasure horses," in contrast with the previous group, the classes which are used almost exclusively for business purposes, we come to the horse that brings by far the highest market prices when of a high degree of excellence, but whose breeding has been attended with more disastrous failures than any other; the horse that is the ennoblement of every equine virtue when it approaches perfection and that is the embodiment of uselessness and insignificance when poor. More "tinkering" has been done with trotting, coach, and

Thoroughbred blood than with any other, and it is safe to state that the unintelligent, indiscriminate, and improper use of sires of these light breeds has had more to do with the development of an unsightly mass of scrub horse stock than any other cause.

Stand by the auction ring of any great horse market and observe closely the horses that fail to bring prices sufficient to cover cost of production. In the great majority of cases trotting blood predominates if any breeding at all is noticeable. Ask a dealer what is the breeding, if any, of most of the large numbers of the unclassified horses on the market, his answer will be: "Trotting and coach blood." This is not because draft blood is more valuable or that the blood of the light breeds is not wanted, for the great cry of the market at present is that good drivers and saddlers are extremely scarce. It is because performance and style are much more difficult to acquire in breeding than size and weight. It is because men with a fascination for the race track attempt to produce trotters without the slightest regard for nature's laws, and no disappointment or failure seems sufficient to bring them to realize their folly. Breeding to a trotter without system and study, but only in the hope of getting a speedy foal as a possibility or an accident, is "playing with fire." The breeding of light horses requires not only a considerable amount of capital, but demands a knowledge of horses of the very highest order. It necessitates concentration of effort and years of waiting and planning. It is not every man that brings such qualities to bear when he takes a 1,600-pound draft mare to a 1,200-pound harness or saddle stallion, and it is largely because of this, and not on account of the breeds themselves, that so many poor horses are forced on the market.

A high-class roadster, coacher, or saddler is by far the most difficult horse to produce that the market calls for. In addition to careful plans of breeding and high individual excellence in the resulting progeny, a course of handling, mannering, and training must be pursued before the horse will figure as a really marketable animal.

These facts must be thoroughly understood if a man would breed light horses for market.

Three pretty well-defined classes, each with several subclasses of more or less distinct demarcation, make up this type. Speaking of the group as a whole, we find that all the virtues of which a horse is possessed must be found in this animal. The higher grades must be perfectly sound in wind and limb, free from blemishes of any kind, and extremely stylish in appearance. Disposition and education are very important; the uses for which he is intended and the conditions surrounding him require that he be kind, gentle, cool-headed in emergencies, and well mannered, yet full of spirit and energy.

DRIVERS.

Roadsters.

Size and weight.—The typical roadster stands from 15.1 to 15.3 hands high and weighs from 950 to 1,150 pounds.

Conformation.—We note now a very radical difference from the heavy horse. The roadster is more upstanding, not so wide, and entirely lacks the massiveness of the drafter, but is deep of chest and middle. In extremes of roadster form, especially when in racing condition, there is a prominent appearance of angularity that, though not unpleasing, is a sharp contrast both to the form of the drafter and, as will be shown later, to that of the coacher.

It is highly essential that feet and legs be not only sound, but of that correct conformation that will prevent unsoundness to the greatest possible extent. The pasterns should be sloping and strong, and the shoulder deep and sloping and extending well into the back. The withers are high and sharp, the back strongly muscled, short, and closely coupled, and the hind quarters long and heavily muscled. The bones from elbow point to knee (forearm) and from stifle to hock (leg) should be nearly twice as long as the cannon bones in their respective limbs, thus giving long leverage and muscles that are long, and therefore quick to respond, and placing the fulcrums of these levers close to the ground, giving strength, steadiness, and poise. The neck should be of medium length[1] to long, smoothly joined to the shoulder, and clearly defined, with a clean-cut throatlatch. The head should be fine and clean-cut, with an erect, neat, medium-sized ear, a full, clear eye and full, good-sized nostrils. Stamina is an essential of this class, and, as an indication, a high degree of quality will be looked for.

Action. There are two opinions prevalent in the market regarding the trotting action of a roadster. One places more emphasis on its approach to the extremes of coach action, while the other regards moderately high action as essential, but does not carry it to the point where speed is sacrificed. This latter idea carried out will develop the long, reachy action that tends to increased speed; it will develop a class of horses that will closely approach the true trotter and will at the same time be less wearing on the horse. The former will branch off in an entirely different direction, with the coach horse as its ultimate end, and, if much speed is also present, will entail a severe strain on the horse. In other words, as between action and speed in a roadster at the trot, some will place more importance on action, while others will seek to develop speed, and will buy accordingly. As a roadster, strictly speaking, is a horse whose purpose is to draw a

[1] It is questioned by good judges and expert buyers whether it is possible to get a neck too long in a horse of any class.

light rig on the road at a fairly high rate of speed for a considerable length of time, the latter idea is technically more nearly correct. All-around and not extreme action is desired. It must be prompt, straight, and frictionless, whether at the trot, the pace, or the walk.

Demand.—Roadsters are in demand for city use or country use, and for any purpose where a horse is wanted for fast driving to a light road wagon or run-about.

The Standard-bred horse.

Size and weight.—The Standard-bred trotter or pacer is the horse of the foregoing class more highly specialized and always eligible to registry in the trotting register.

Conformation.—This shows the extreme of speed production, and is the result of years of breeding for the sole purpose of increased speed. It is the roadster type carried to the farthest known limit. A better description of the type was never made than the one comparing the conformation to that of the greyhound.

Action.—The sole purpose of action in the Standard-bred horse is for the development of the greatest speed with the least possible expenditure of energy. The most important essentials are straightness, smoothness, and reach.

Demand.—Eligible trotters and pacers are in demand for racing purposes, both amateur and professional, and for the breeding stud.

COACHERS.

The connection between the coach horse and the roadster is extremely close, the differences between the two groups being chiefly those of conformation and action.

Coach horses.

Size and weight.—A typical coach horse stands 15.2 to 16 hands and weighs from 1,100 to 1,250 pounds.

Conformation.—A coacher is considerably heavier, smoother, and more compact than a roadster. The conditions of his work, of course, require soundness as an absolute essential. His legs are clean cut and well muscled, with sloping pasterns and shoulders; the back short, closely coupled to the hind quarters, and smoothly muscled. The hind quarters are well packed with muscle, smooth, and rounded, not straight and angular as in the roadster. A smooth, well-filled, evenly rounded quarter is regarded with much favor. The tail should be set well up and carried high. In the shoulders the same points of smoothness and lack of angularity are required. The withers should be high and thin, the neck smoothly joined to the shoulders, long and clean, with a full crest, the head fine and of medium size, with fine ears, a full, clear eye, and large open nostrils.

Photograph by Lawrence.

A Pair of Coachers.

Photograph by Lawrence.

A PAIR OF LADIES' COBS.

Note the style, symmetry, and high quality, and, in comparison with the foregoing pair, the smaller size and lighter, finer bone.

Photograph furnished by Gen. John B. Castleman.

PRIZE-WINNING AMERICAN SADDLE STALLION "GOODWIN," IN HIS TWO-YEAR-OLD FORM.

A typical illustration of the American gaited saddler that needs no explanation.

Photograph by Lawrence.

A PRIZE-WINNING WALK, TROT, AND CANTER SADDLER.

This horse would enter in the class for ladies' saddlers at a show. Note the liveliness, the expression of intelligence and good disposition, the ample bone, and quality.

Quality is as important in the coacher as in the roadster, and for similar reasons.

Action.—Conformation and action are absolutely essential to a coach horse and to each other; that is, a horse can not lay claim to merit as a coacher unless he has both of these qualifications. Proper conformation should first be present, for then the animal may be trained to act fairly well, but if a fine actor is rough and "weedy" in make up no amount of feeding and care can give him form and style.

In discussing the coach action the necessity for the legs to be moved straight and true is perhaps the first thing to be considered, for the extreme flexing of the legs, especially at the knees, makes it all the more difficult for the horse to move them in a straight line, and thus increases the danger of injury to himself by interfering, to say nothing of the unsightliness of faulty action. The fore legs are flexed as high as possible and the feet extended with a sort of rotary motion that is very different from the long reach of the roadster.

The most difficult action to acquire is at the hocks. That of the knees may be developed by training and shoeing, but high, elastic hock action is well-nigh a hopeless proposition unless bred in the horse. It may be easily inferred that it is far less common than first-rate knee action. The hocks should be flexed without any deviation from a straight line, the feet carried in much the same manner as in front and placed directly in front of their former positions, with as little jar as possible. At all times a coacher must "keep his legs under him." He does not extend himself as a roadster; there is not the long reach in front nor the swing behind.

A moderate degree of speed always gives added value to a coach horse, but much speed is not only not absolutely necessary, but is, according to the nature of things, usually out of the question. Much of the energy of the horse's effort is expended in lifting his feet as high as possible, and the combination of this effort with that of speed-making reach is asking too much of a horse, as it entails so great an amount of wear on the animal organism that it would soon give way.

While a coacher must be thoroughly sound, he is not required to have the great speed powers or endurance of the roadster. Short distances only are expected of him at a rate of from 6 to 10 miles an hour.

Demand.—The demand for a stylish animal for city driving takes all the available horses that come to the market. Some are exported, but the foreign demand has comparatively little effect on this class. The demand from the American cities is strong, the only complaint being that the right kind of horses are extremely difficult to find.

Cobs.

Size and weight.—A typical cob stands about 15.1 hands and weighs from 1,000 to 1,050 pounds.

Conformation.—If anything, the cob is more compact and smoother than a coacher, and on somewhat shorter legs. He shows the highest possible amount of style and should be a horse of much beauty. "He is a nice, flashy, trappy-going little coach horse."

Action.—In action a cob has the highest development of any of the coachers, and has, especially, that sharp, snappy quality that horsemen call "trappy."

Demand.—Cobs supply the same class of trade as the full-sized coachers, and are used for the lighter grades of work to which a coacher may be put.

SADDLERS.

The saddle horse.

Size and weight.—A saddler will vary considerably in the characteristics of size and weight, depending on the character of the work for which he is intended and the amount of weight he is to carry. As a general rule, a range of from 15.1 to 15.3 in height and from 1,000 to 1,150 pounds in weight will describe this pretty accurately.

A horse of 15.1 hands height and 1,000 pounds weight makes what is called a "ladies' saddler;" or if a walk, trot, and canter horse, a "ladies' hack;" but for heavier riders the larger animals naturally are required, some men needing a horse standing over 16 hands and weighing 1,200 pounds or even more.

Conformation.—A typical saddler does not differ in form in any marked degree from other light horses. Many good saddlers come direct from harness stock. The principal requirements that are to a certain extent peculiar to this class are: (1) Sloping pasterns and shoulders; a straight pastern and shoulder is an added objectionable feature in a saddle horse, for it is almost certain to make him a hard rider. (2) Moderately high and narrow withers, for the same reason; the height of the withers above the hind quarters should not be exaggerated—not more than an inch. The extension of the shoulder into the back and the shortness and compactness of coupling are extremely important.

The saddler shows, perhaps, more style than any other class of horses. He should have a high degree of quality, showing in each detail a ribbon-like smoothness from end to end. Shoulders should be smooth and even, and hind quarters well rounded and smooth. Rotundity of body is a marked feature. He is usually somewhat upstanding, and should have a high-set, smartly carried head and tail. An ideal saddler will naturally have a head that shows an unusual disposition and high intelligence, for the intimate relation between a horse and his rider demands thinking ability on both sides.

Action.—Two styles of a saddle action are demanded—the walk, trot, and canter action, and the gaits of the American Saddle Horse

Breeders' Association—the walk, trot, canter, rack, and running walk, fox trot, or slow pace. Any one of the last three of the second style is acceptable to breeders of this type, but the first four must always be present. The dictates of fashion have a good deal to do with the market demands for gaits. Just at present a horse with walk, trot, and canter only is somewhat preferred, but the American saddle horse will always be in demand as a very useful animal, and will be valuable in the production of saddlers, for training can bring out the desired action, and for intelligence and extreme style no breed will surpass him. Saddle action must, first of all, be sure. A horse inclined to stumble is dangerous. Following this we look for snap, moderate height, and particularly straightness and evenness in all gaits.

Demand.—Saddlers are in demand for both city and country trade, and are by no means equal to the demand.

Hunters.

Size and weight.—The class of horses known as hunters is divided into "light" and "heavy" hunters; the former carrying ladies and light-weight men, and the latter able to take men of a weight up to 200 pounds. Naturally there will be many variations between these two classes, the requirements of each rider indicating the weight of his mount. A range of from 15.2 hands, with a weight of 1,100 pounds, to 16.2 hands, weighing 1,200 or 1,250 pounds, would be a fair approximation.

Conformation.—A typical hunter shows a conformation of a rather rangy order, but not loosely built, standing pretty well from the ground with legs of much bone, depending on the weight he is to carry. The shoulder should be deep; the body deep and full chested; "short above and long below," the barrel with a good development, but not paunchy; well built in every particular to be a ground gainer. Too much muscularity can hardly be present; the hind quarters should be especially long and deeply muscled. Thick necks are avoided; rather a thin long neck with a good-sized intelligent head is preferred.

The hunter must show plenty of quality; stamina is absolutely necessary for work such as he is to perform. His head must show that high degree of intelligence and fearlessness that insure the confidence of his rider.

Action.—The most desirable feature in the motive power of a hunter is his jumping ability. Not only must there be the capacity to clear any reasonable obstacle that presents itself,[1] but this must be done gracefully and willingly. Of course, a straight, smooth, easy movement is always necessary. Speed adds much to the value of a hunter, especially if his rider has ambitions to gratify.

[1] The usual height of the fences hunted over ranges from 3 to 4 feet.

Demand.—This class of horses is in ready demand by persons of means who enjoy the sport of following the hounds. The same condition presents itself that is found in other classes of light horses, namely, that the price of a suitable animal will always be a long one. Riding to hounds is gaining in popularity in this country and is an influential force in the development of the horse market.

The Thoroughbred.

The breeding of Thoroughbreds is rapidly assuming large proportions. Many of the sales that have been held during the past year have averaged $1,000, even for yearlings, and fabulous sums have been paid for mature breeding animals, the large prices brought by aged mares showing the strong demand that exists. The Thoroughbred bears to some extent the same relation to the hunter that the Standard-bred horse does to the roadster; that is, he is largely the producer of the hunter, the principal difference being that the hunter usually lacks the speed of a racer, and is not recorded in the studbook.

Polo ponies.

The three essentials of a polo pony are (1) weight carrying ability, with small size, (2) agility, and (3) speed.

Size and weight. The maximum height is 14.2 hands. The weight for such a height will be about 850 pounds.

Conformation. Good bone and compact conformation are requisite, with as much muscle as possible. "Get quarters on him like a cart horse, if you can," said a polo authority. Short cannon bones, especially in the hind legs, give the horse a control of himself that enables him to turn with speed and agility. Perfect soundness and extreme quality are indispensable, for the strain of the game and the demands made on a pony's endurance are usually severe.

Intelligence and training.—Courage and intelligence are prime requisites with a polo pony. Quickness of sight and a keen enjoyment of the game make an animal still more valuable. Along this line it must be remembered that all ponies will not learn the game. Horses are differently constituted in this respect, and such things must be expected.

Action.—The principal requirement in action is agility. The pony must always have himself well under control, with the ability to come to a dead stop almost instantly from a run, and the quickness that enables him to "turn on a dollar," as a Westerner puts it. Speed is also necessary, but agility first of all.

Demand.—Like the preceding class, the growth of a fascinating sport is rapidly opening up a market for another class of horses, and, like the hunters, polo ponies bring long prices when suitable for such

By courtesy of Rider and Driver.

A TYPICAL HUNTER.

Observe the rangy conformation, and abundance of muscle and bone that are characteristic of this class of horses.

By courtesy of Horse Show Monthly.

A good Type of Polo Pony.

This pony was western bred.

work, and are sound. Most players have four or five horses constantly on hand, and some have twenty or thirty in their stables.

It is an interesting fact that no better polo ponies are found in the United States than Western "cow ponies" that are sound and well set up, with a few months' education in the rudiments of the game as a finishing school.

Cavalry horses.

Troopers.—At uncertain intervals the market calls for horses to fill contracts with army authorities. The demand is not exceedingly large at any time and at no time is it steady. As a general rule, these horses are selected from the various classes of light horses. Foreign governments have executed orders to some extent for army stock, most horses that are regularly bought for this purpose going to England; and within the past two years immense numbers of animals have been purchased by British agents for use in South Africa, swelling the exports last year by over 30,000. Under no circumstances, however, can the army demand be looked upon as of such character as to affect the market steadily.

The best horses bought for army purposes in this country are for the United States Army, those bought for home use by the British army next, and the stock for South Africa fall to the bottom of the scale. The United States Army demands a practically sound and unblemished horse. The specifications for the cavalry horse follow:

(Article 1142, United States Army regulations, 1901.)

The cavalry horse must be sound and well bred; gentle under the saddle; free from vicious habits; with free and prompt action at the walk, trot, and gallop; without blemish or defect; of a kind disposition; with easy mouth and gait; and otherwise to conform to the following description:

A gelding of uniform and hardy color; in good condition; from 15¼ to 16 hands high; weight not less than 950 nor more than 1,150 pounds; from four to eight years old; head and ears small; forehead broad; eyes large and prominent; vision perfect in every respect; shoulders long and sloping well back; chest full, broad, and deep; fore legs straight and standing well under; barrel large and increasing from girth toward flank; withers elevated; back short and straight; loins and haunches broad and muscular; hocks well bent and under the horse; pasterns slanting, and feet small and sound.

Each horse will be subjected to a rigid inspection, and any animal that does not meet the above requirements in every respect must be rejected.

A horse under five years old should not be accepted unless a specially fine, well-developed animal.

MINOR CLASSES.

Strictly speaking, the horses mentioned below are not in market demand. They sell, however, if the price is low enough, and follow the natural result of such a condition of being dangerously near a losing investment to the seller.

GENERAL-PURPOSE HORSES.

A very large proportion of the horses on the market are what are known in stock yards reports and market quotations as "general purpose" animals. They are horses without any particular type, embracing misfits of all kinds of breeding, though not scrubs, as a rule, and usually being of fair to good quality without those characteristics that fit a horse for a market class. In many cases they may be serviceably sound—perhaps so in the majority of instances.

Such animals are used, as the name designates, for anything and everything, but the demand is not well defined, and the supply far too large to make this kind of horse a feature of the market other than by its numbers. The average prices for them are next to the lowest quoted.

SOUTHERN HORSES.

At most of the Western markets, particularly those on the Missouri River and at St. Louis, there exists a good demand, strongest in the spring of the year, for a rather inferior grade of horses for the Southern trade. They range in quality from very inferior to very "nice" animals. They comprise mainly an assortment of practically unclassed horses, but as much of the roadster type as any. Many are sold as drivers, some as saddlers, the best grades usually going to Virginia. Prices range from $5 to $200.

PLUGS AND SCRUBS.

These wrecks of horseflesh seem out of place in a discussion of market classes of horses. Plugs are usually those animals that have come back from final sale after being worn out by long years of work. Scrubs are described by the name.

THE MARKET FOR RANGE HORSES.

This phase of the horse market is somewhat difficult to treat. When animals are sold on the market as "range horses," it is generally understood that they are unbroken branded horses brought in and sold in carload lots, usually going to the country to be broken, and finally resold as finished horses. On the other hand, if range men are equipped to break their young stock thoroughly and do not brand them, such horses sell as natives, and strictly on their merits.

While the prejudice against a branded horse is not so strong as formerly, a brand still has a very cooling effect on the enthusiasm of a prospective buyer. The memory of the evil disposition of the old horses of this country and the frequently exaggerated stories of its presence to-day are constantly called to the attention of the public. However, it is safe to state that the character and disposition of the range horse and his individuality are being greatly improved by the enlightened policy of the more progressive ranchmen. His temper is

Photograph by Thompeter.

A PAIR OF RANGE-BRED COACHERS.

An object lesson in the possibilities of the range in horse breeding. These horses were by German coach stallions. Note especially the smoothness and rotundity of body, the quality, finish, and size.

being bettered by closer communication with man and better methods of handling, and the standard of breeding is being raised by the use of large numbers of purebred sires that have been brought in from the Eastern States and Europe. At the same time the wonderful quality and endurance of the native stock have been retained, and, however we may look upon the range horse personally, we must admit that the foundation is there for a very excellent horse stock. The systematic experimenting that has been done by shipping rangers East as youngsters has been very successful, though grades of only average quality were used.

In speaking favorably of the range horse, the grades which are usually the offspring of purebred sires are meant. These represent what the range is able to do in producing horses, and show its possibilities in the best light, which is no more than fair. With the average old-time ranger—the cayuse, mustang, or Indian pony—only exceptional individuals are worthy of attention. In the main, there is no meaner kind of equine to be found than what is known in different localities under one or another of these names.

It can not be said that even a large part of the range horses sold on the Western markets show much evidence of breeding. The work of improvement is yet in its primary stages.

The rangers divide into three fairly well-defined classes—ponies, saddlers and drivers, and chunks.

PONIES.

These are the descendants of the ancient stock that is known by the various names of cayuse, Indian pony, mustang, etc. They stand up to 14.2 hands, weighing up to 750 or 900 pounds. Some of them are horses of quality, endurance, and intelligence, and make good riding animals.

These horses are very useful for herding cattle, often showing an intelligence and agility that is wonderful and frequently disconcerting to the rider. They also furnish some of the best material for polo work that can be found, especially when mares of good type are crossed with small Thoroughbred sires. However, the cow pony that will make a good polo pony is not easily found. It is the exception, not the rule, that satisfies the buyer and brings the long prices. In such instances, the pony would not go on the market under the same conditions as the ordinary ranger. He is the exception, but an exception that serves a valuable purpose for illustrating the possibilities of the best types of range stock.

SADDLERS AND DRIVERS.

These horses are the first as a range class that may show breeding. The grades of coach, Standard-bred, and Thoroughbred sires will come

under this head. They could be described as horses standing from 14.2 to 15.2 hands and weighing from 900 to 1,100 pounds, with an occasional good one of larger size.

CHUNKS.

These usually embrace the draft grades, standing 15 hands and up, and weighing from 1,100 to 1,400 pounds. Extra individuals often weigh over 1,500 pounds.

DEMAND.

The larger number of range horses normally find their final place of consumption on farms and in small towns. The British Government has bought thousands of them, and the United States Army is often supplied with cavalry horses from these sources. Quite often branded horses will be found in the export stables.

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